



Meeting Policymakers' Education Responsibilities Requires Cross-State Data Collaboration, Sharing, and Comparability

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States have responsibilities to ensure that transferring students receive uninterrupted education and services, produce indicators that provide a complete picture, and ensure that information is comparable across states.

However, states' and districts' ability to meet these responsibilities requires data capacity that can be undermined due to significant mobility of students and teachers across state lines and lack of comparability across states (see table below).

It is vital that policymakers understand these challenges and work with other state policymakers to standardize education data, support student record exchanges, share limited and appropriate data across state lines, and define and use common metrics (see table on next page). Just as state policymakers worked together on a common-sense solution to the need for common state standards, it is critical that state policymakers take the lead in finding collaborative solutions to states' interdependent data challenges.

States have a responsibility to . . .	The reality is . . .	Unfortunately, this reality means that . . .	It is critical that policymakers work with leaders in other states to . . .
Ensure that transferring students receive uninterrupted education and services	Each year, approximately 187,000 families ¹ with an estimated 80,000 school-age children move to a different state. ²	Students' education and services are interrupted due to districts' challenges in efficiently and effectively obtaining incoming students' records, which inhibits districts' ability to ensure appropriate enrollment, placement, and accrual of credits for students who have moved.	Implement collaborative solutions to transfer student records efficiently within and across states, including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ standardized education data, and ▶ multistate student record exchanges.
Produce indicators that provide a complete picture	<p>Twenty-one percent of teachers who receive initial teaching licenses or certificates were trained in another state.³</p> <p>Each year, approximately 400,000 recent high school graduates enroll as first-time freshmen in out-of-state institutions (approximately 19 percent of the incoming class).⁴</p>	Important and high-stakes indicators produced with only <i>in-state data</i> do not include the outcomes of students or teachers who have crossed state lines and thus can be misleading or inaccurate.	Support solutions for sharing limited and appropriate P-20/ workforce data across state lines to ensure that indicators provide a more complete picture, including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ standardized education data, and ▶ limited and appropriate data sharing.
Ensure that information is comparable across states	<p>Forty-five states and the District of Columbia have adopted the Common Core State Standards.⁵</p> <p>All but five states are involved in one of the two multistate consortia to develop and implement common assessments aligned to the Common Core State Standards.</p>	Outcomes in states are compared using metrics based on inconsistent definitions and data standards.	Define and use common metrics and data standards across states to provide stakeholders with comparable information in context to support appropriate conclusions and scaling of best practices through <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ standardized education data, and ▶ common metrics.



The last column on page 1 noted critical actions for state policymakers and specific data requirements. This table describes those data requirements in more detail and provides examples

of current efforts. Like most efforts related to data collection, sharing, and use, each of these efforts continues to struggle with issues of effectiveness and efficiency.

MULTISTATE STUDENT RECORD EXCHANGES	STANDARDIZED EDUCATION DATA
<p>Electronic mechanisms to securely request and receive individual student records as students change schools within and across state lines.</p>	<p>Data that conform to detailed standards for data element names, definitions, and formats to support quality, comparability, and efficient sharing of data.⁶</p>
<p>EXAMPLE: The Migrant Student Information Exchange provides an electronic exchange for the transfer of limited education and health data on migrant students who have records in multiple states' systems.</p>	<p>EXAMPLE: The Common Education Data Standards is a national collaborative effort to develop voluntary, common data standards for a key set of education data elements to streamline the exchange and comparison of data across institutions and sectors.</p>
LIMITED AND APPROPRIATE DATA SHARING	COMMON METRICS
<p>Provision of limited and appropriate student-level datasets across systems. Effective data sharing typically involves the following:</p>	<p>Metrics produced using common definitions and calculations. There are many efforts in the education sector to broker consensus around common metrics, such as Complete College America.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ linking systems through a technical mechanism that enables finding a unique individual's data in disparate systems ▶ matching data to combine data records on the same individual from two or more databases ▶ sharing information to provide participating entities with richer knowledge than was available before the data were matched⁷ 	<p>EXAMPLE: In 2005, governors of all 50 states voluntarily signed the National Governors Association Graduation Counts Compact, agreeing to use a common formula for producing a four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate to improve the quality and comparability of reported state graduation rates.⁸</p>
<p>EXAMPLE: The Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE) leads a multistate (Hawaii, Idaho, Oregon, and Washington) effort to share data about students' postsecondary and workforce outcomes to inform education and workforce development policies.</p> <p>The nonprofit National Student Clearinghouse (NSC) maintains a comprehensive electronic registry of student records that includes student enrollment, degree, and loan data but does not include any course-level data. More than 3,300 colleges and hundreds of local school districts participate in the clearinghouse. The clearinghouse allows states to obtain limited data on students who pursue postsecondary education in another state.</p>	<p>Complete College America and the National Governors Association have developed a set of common metrics for postsecondary progress and success.</p> <p>Through the Common Core State Standards initiative, the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers, and the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium, states are working together to develop and implement common assessments aligned to common standards.</p>

Endnotes

- 1 U.S. Census, Geographic Mobility 2010–11. *Table 9. General Mobility of Family Householders, by Type of Household, Race and Hispanic Origin of Householder, and Presence and Age of Own Children Under 18: 2010 to 2011.* <http://www.census.gov/hhes/migration/data/cps/cps2011.html>
- 2 U.S. Census, Geographic Mobility 2010–11. *Table 1. General Mobility, by Race and Hispanic Origin, Region, Sex, Age, Relationship to Householder, Educational Attainment, Marital Status, Nativity, Tenure, and Poverty Status: 2010 to 2011.* <http://www.census.gov/hhes/migration/data/cps/cps2011.html>
- 3 U.S. Department of Education, Office of Postsecondary Education, *Preparing and Credentialing the Nation's Teachers: The Secretary's Eighth Report on Teacher Quality; Based on Data Provided for 2008, 2009 and 2010*, Washington, DC, 2011.
- 4 National Center for Education Statistics, Digest of Education Statistics, *Table 231. Residence and Migration of All Freshmen Students in Degree-Granting Institutions, by State or Jurisdiction: Fall 2008.* http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d10/tables/dt10_231.asp
- 5 Common Core State Standards Initiative. <http://www.corestandards.org/>
- 6 See Data Quality Campaign's recent publication *Supporting Education Policy and Practice through Common Data Standards* for more information.
- 7 See Data Quality Campaign's recent publication *Pivotal Role of Policymakers as Leaders of P–20/Workforce Data Governance* for more information.
- 8 For more information, visit <http://www.nga.org/files/live/sites/NGA/files/pdf/0907GRADCOUNTSPROGRESS.PDF>.

Breaking Down State Silos Series

This publication is part of a series that includes *Limited Out-of-State Data Needed to Produce Robust Indicators*. Future topics in the series may include a focus on student record exchange and providing comparable information across state lines.